

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)	CASE NO.: 1:18CR006
)	
Plaintiff,)	JUDGE DONALD C. NUGENT
)	
v.)	
)	
AESHA JOHNSON,)	<u>PROPOSED STATEMENT OF THE CASE</u>
)	
Defendant.)	

The parties, the United States of America, by and through its counsel, Justin E. Herdman, United States Attorney, and Matthew J. Cronin and Justin Seabury Gould, Assistant United States Attorneys, and Aesha Johnson, by and through her counsel, W. Scott Ramsey, jointly submit the following proposed statement of the case.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

This is a criminal wire fraud and identity theft case. The Defendant, Aesha Johnson, is a Cleveland resident.

Count 1 of the Superseding Indictment charges the Defendant, Aesha Johnson, with conspiracy to commit wire fraud. According to the Superseding Indictment, Johnson conspired with Brittany Williams (her daughter) and others known and unknown to commit the criminal scheme. The conspiracy involved the filing of false federal income tax returns in the names of low-income persons (“victims”) that generated tax refunds. Filing these federal income tax returns in the names of the victims required the knowledge of their personal identifying information. Johnson acquired the victims’ personal identifying information through a variety of means, including a prior criminal scheme. The ultimate purpose of the conspiracy was to enrich the co-conspirators while avoiding detection.

Johnson was incarcerated in federal prison during a portion of the conspiracy. While incarcerated, Johnson made calls and emails to Brittany Williams, instructing her in code about how to file the false tax returns using the victims' identities. Williams would then follow these instructions, filing the false tax returns using the victims' identities and reporting back to Johnson about her progress.

Johnson denies the allegations in Count 1.

Counts 2-15 allege that Johnson committed wire fraud offenses involving the transmission of tax returns originating in Ohio and ultimately transmitting to an IRS tax processing center in West Virginia. These wires were in furtherance of the fraudulent tax return scheme.

Johnson denies the allegation in Counts 2-15.

Counts 16-29 allege that Johnson committed, and aided and abetted the commission of, aggravated identity theft through wire transmissions of victims' personal identifying information to the IRS without the victims' consent and in furtherance of the fraudulent tax return scheme.

Johnson denies the allegations in Counts 16-29.

Count 30 alleges that Johnson committed the crime of witness tampering. In particular, the count alleges that Johnson intimidated, threatened, or corruptly persuaded Brittany Williams with the intent to either (a) influence, delay, or prevent Williams' testimony in an official proceeding; or (b) hinder, delay, or prevent Williams' communication to a law enforcement officer of the United States of information relating to the commission or possible commission of a federal offense.

Johnson denies the allegations in Count 30.

Respectfully submitted,

JUSTIN E. HERDMAN
United States Attorney

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on March 1, 2019, a copy of the foregoing was filed electronically.

Notice of this filing will be sent to all parties by operation of the Court's electronic filing system. All other parties will be served by regular U.S. Mail. Parties may access this filing through the Court's system.

/s/ Matthew J. Cronin

Matthew J. Cronin

Assistant U.S. Attorney